

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0624

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 MONTEVIDEO 0490

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, PINS, UY

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY, AN UPDATE

REFS: (A) MONTEVIDEO 241, (B) MONTEVIDEO 0019, (C) STATE

019110, (D) STATE 012320, (E) 75 MONTEVIDEO 4406,

(F) 75 MONTEVIDEO 3470, (G) 75 MONTEVIDEO A-23

1. THAT WHICH FOLLOWS IS IN RESPONSE TO REFTEL (C).

INASMUCH AS THIS MESSAGE IS AN UPDATE TO REFTEL (F), IT
WILL ADDRESS ONLY THE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 8, 1975 TO THE
PRESENT.

2. FOR AN OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION, THE MISSION
RECOMMENDS A READING OF MVD 241. AS IS CLEAR FROM THIS
AND OTHER MISSION REPORTING AND FROM THE PARAGRAPHS WHICH
FOLLOW, THERE CONTINUE TO BE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS
IN URUGUAY. PARAGRAPHS 3 THROUGH 11 ARE UPDATES OF
PARAGRAPHS 6-14 OF REFTEL (F).

3. UNLAWFUL KILLINGS

THE MISSION IS AWARE OF ONE DEATH WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN
DUE TO UNLAWFUL PRACTICES. ACCORDING TO AN EDITORIAL THAT
APPEARED IN THE DAILY LA OPINION IN BUENOS AIRES ON
OCTOBER 15, PEDRO LERENA MARTINEZ, 33 YEARS OF AGE, HAD DIED
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AS A RESULT OF MATLTREATMENT INFLICTED ON HIM BY THE 9TH
CAVALRY REGIMENT OF MONTEVIDEO. ACCORDING TO OUR OWN SOURCES,

LERENA DID DIE IN CUSTODY. HE HAD BEEN WORKING IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE AND WAS APPARENTLY THE NEPHEW OF ONE COL. LARENA (WHO HAD BEEN ONE OF THE ORIGINAL INTERVENORS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PALACE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT LERENA DIED DURING AND AS A RESULT OF AN INTERROGATION.

ON OCTOBER 16, THE URUGUAYAN MEDIA REPORTED THAT ON THE PREVIOUS DAY AN INCENDIARY BOMB WAS HURLED INTO THE INNER COURTYARD OF THE URUGUAYAN EMBASSY AT THE HOLY SEE, DAMAGING THE AUTOMOBILE OF URUGUAYAN AMBASSADOR ARUL ABRAGAN BUT CAUSING NO CASUALTIES. A NOTE LEFT BY THE TERRORISTS SAID THAT THE ATTACK WAS "TO AVENGE THE DEATH OF PEDRO LARENA (TUPAMARO LEADER)."

4. TORTURE

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POSSIBLY PHYSICAL ABUSE OF SUSPECTED SUBVERSIVES MAY WELL HAVE INCREASED DURING THE PERIOD AS SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN A GOU SECURITY OPERATION DESIGNED TO PUT AN END TO CLANDESTINE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCU) ACTIVITIES. DIRECT EVIDENCE OF TORTURE OR PHYSICAL ABUSE, IS, HOWEVER, ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN AND MOST, IF NOT ALL, ACCOUNTS DEPEND UPON "HEARSAY".

5. ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION

THERE FOLLOWS A LIST OF CERTAIN ARRESTS ABOUT WHICH WE HAVE KNOWLEDGE, SOME OF WHICH WERE REPORTED IN THE PRESS. THE GOU WOULD ARGUE THAT ALL OF THEM WERE FOR VALID REASONS AND WERE NOT ARBITRARY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT SITUATION. WE INCLUDE THEM UNDER THIS SECTION BECAUSE OTHERS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE MAY CONSIDER THEM ARBITRARY ON THE BASIS THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IN URUGUAY, CONTRARY TO WHAT THE GOU STATES, DOES NOT WARRANT SUCH ARRESTS.

A. ON OCTOBER 6, 1975, IN THE CITY OF MINAS, THE ARMY DETAINED FOUR PEOPLE FOR HOLDING A MEETING PRESUMED TO BE FOR SUBVERSIVE PURPOSES AND ATTACHED 259 BOOKS OF MARXIST ORIENTATION. THREE OF THE PEOPLE, INCLUDING EX-SENATOR PEDRO ZABALZA ARROJUDE,
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WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED. THE CASE OF THE ONE PCU MEMBER IN THE GROUP, DR. FIRMO GODOFREDO FERNANDEZ CARTELLA, WAS TURNED OVER TO THE MILITARY JUDGE FOR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION.

B. ON OCTOBER 24, 1975, WE RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT A FORMER BLANCO DEPUTY, OSCAR LOPEZ BALESTRA, WAS PICKED UP AND DETAINED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF TACUAREMBO IN AUGUST OF LAST YEAR. THIS WAS APPARENTLY DONE ON THE PRETEXT THAT HIS BUSINESS, WHICH HAD JUST GONE BANKRUPT, HAD BEEN USED AS A MEANS OF ACQUIRING ARMS FOR THE OPPONENTS OF THE REGIME.

C. ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1975, JUAN RAUL FERREIRA, SON OF EX-SENATOR WILSON FERREIRA, WAS ARRESTED AND HELD FOR ABOUT FOUR DAYS IN A MOVE CONSTRUED BY SOME AS A MEANS OF INTIMIDATING HIS FATHER BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR A VISIT TO THE U.S. ON NOVEMBER 15. NEVERTHELESS, JUAN RAUL WAS THEN GIVEN COMPLETE LIBERTY TO TRAVEL, WHICH HE DID.

D. ON APPROXIMATELY DECEMBER 8, 1975, ONE FREDDY BENTENCOUR, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION RECEIVED BY AN EMBOFF, WAS ALLEGEDLY ARRESTED FOR POLITICAL REASONS WHICH WERE NEVER FULLY EXPLAINED.

6. UNFAIR TRIALS

SOME MAY VIEW AS UNFAIR A NEW LAW ANNOUNCED ON DECEMBER 18TH BY THE COUNCIL OF STATE, EXTENDING THE JURISDICTION OF MILITARY COURTS TO COVER THE TRIAL AND PUNISHMENT OF PEOPLE ACCUSED OF "CRIMES AGAINST THE NATION," NO MATTER WHEN COMMITTED. THE LAW WOULD ALSO HAVE THE EFFECT OF PLACING UNDER MILITARY JURISDICTION ALL PERSONS ON TRIAL BEFORE A CIVILIAN JUDGE FOR SUCH CRIMES, PROVIDED THAT FINAL JUDGEMENT HAD NOT BEEN RENDERED. THE MILITARY COURTS HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN GIVEN THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGATION AND ARRAIGNMENT OF PEOPLE HAVING COMMITTED SUCH "CRIMES AGAINST THE NATION." FOR APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF URUGUAYAN LAW, SEE 75 MONTEVIDEO A-9 (JANUARY 25).

7. OPINION

NO CHANGE. SINCE THE LAST REPORT, THE GOU ORDERED THE CLOSING
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OF TWO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS THAT IT ACCUSED OF BEING
INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS OF MARXISM. (SEE MVD 0225).

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 625

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 MONTEVIDEO 0490

LAST OCTOBER, THE GOU POSTPONED THE DISTRIBUTION OF A PASTORAL LETTER OF THE URUGUAYAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS, PENDING A FEW CHANGES IN THE TEXT. (SEE 75 MVD A-157).

8. EXPRESSION

A. NO CHANGE. THE PUBLISHER OF EL CIVISMO (A WEEKLY PAPER PUBLISHED IN ROCHA), DOMINGO LOPEZ DE GANDO, WAS JAULED AGAIN AND HIS PAPER CLOSED FOR TWENTY EDITIONS (IT HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN CLOSED FOR FIVE EDITIONS) FOR PUBLISHING "SUBVERSIVE" ARTICLES AND NEWS.

B. IN A DECREE ISSUED OCTOBER 14, THE GOU ORDERED THE CLOSING OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE EDITORIAL PUEBLOS UNIDOS (EPU) IN MONTEVIDEO CLAIMING THAT IT WAS A FRONT ORGANIZATION FOR THE PUC AND HAD BECOME A MAIN DISTRIBUTION CENTER FOR SOUTH AMERICA OF COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA MATERIAL COMING FROM THE USSR AND EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES. THE DECREE ALSO ORDERED THE SEIZURE OF ALL COMPANY PROPERTY

AND THE INTERDICTION OF ANY FUNDS IT MIGHT HAVE ON DEPOSIT AT ANY LOCAL BANK.

C. ON NOV 12, THE GOU ORDERED THE CLOSING OF THE DAILY EL TELEGRAFO OF THE CITY OF PAYSANDU FOR FIVE EDITIONS FOR HAVING QUESTIONED THE VERACITY OF A POLICE BULLETIN REPORTING ON A PUBLIC EVENT.

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D. ON NOV 27, THE WEEKLY PAPER EL INTRANSIGENTE OF THE CITY OF ARTIGAS WAS ORDERED CLOSED BY THE GOU FOR THREE EDITIONS FOR PUBLISHING AN EDITORIAL CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

E ON NOV 21, THE GOU ORDERED THE CLOSING FOR FOUR DAYS OF RADIO COLONIA FOR TRANSMITTING CRITICISM OF A "MARXIST/ LENINIST" CHARACTER AGAINST FRANCO ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEATH.

F. ON DEC 4, THE WEEKLY PAPER EL HERALDO OF THE CITY OF YOUNG WAS ORDERED CLOSED FOR FOUR EDITIONS FOR HAVING REPUBLISHED EDITORIALS FROM EL CIVISMO, THE WEEKLY PAPER OF ROCHA, CRITICAL OF THE GOU.

G. ON DEC 29, THE GOU ORDERED THE CLOSING DOWN OF THE MAGAZINE PERSPECTIVE DE DIALOGO FOR HAVING CRITICIZED THE ARMED FORCES FOR AN OPERATION CONDUCTED BY THE JOINT FORCES AGAINST A GROUP OF JESUITS ON GOOD FRIDAY OF THAT YEAR.

9. ASSEMBLY

NO CHANGE.

10. ASSOCIATION

NO CHANGE.

11. DEPRIVATION OF THE RIGHT TO TAKE PART IN GOVERNMENT

NO CHANGE.

12. APPREHENSIONS AND CONVICTION PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED BY GOU SINCE OCT 8, 1975

SINCE THE LAST HUMAN RIGHTS UPDATE, THE GOU PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING DETENTIONS, ARRAIGNMENTS AND CONVICTIONS, ALMOST ALL OF WHICH APPEARED IN THE NEWSPAPERS.

NOTE: A DISTINCTION MUST BE DRAWN BETWEEN THE ORDINARY PENAL CODE (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE OPC), APPLICABLE TO URUGUAYAN
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CITIZENS IN GENERAL AND THE MILITARY PENAL CODE. (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE MPC).

A. DURING THE FIRST PART OF OCT, ACCORDING TO A BULLETIN ISSUED BY THE JOINT FORCES, 11 PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED AND TRIED IN MILITARY COURTS FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. TEN WERE CONVICTED FOR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT SUBVERSION AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION, WHICH FALLS UNDER ARTICLE 60, SECTION 6 OF THE MPC. THE OTHER WAS CONVICTED FOR LENDING ASSISTANCE TO THE CONSPIRACY, WHICH CRIME ALSO FALLS UNDER ARTICLE 60 OF THE MPC.

B. IN MONTEVIDEO, ACCORDING TO A BULLETIN ISSUED BY THE JOINT FORCES ON OCTOBER 9, A CARPENTRE WAS CONVICTED UNDER A PROVISION OF THE SAME ARTICLE FOR "INCITEMENT" TO SUBVERSION AND A PROFESSOR WAS ALSO CONVICTED UNDER A PROVISION OF THE SAME ARTICLE FOR RENDERING ASSISTANCE TO A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION.

ON OCT 9, THE JOINT FORCES ORDERED THE PROSECUTION OF TWO URUGUAYANS, HECTOR RICARDO SAXLUND BARDIER, A DRAFTSMAN BY PROFESSION, AND CORINA GASO RIVERA. THEY WERE SAID TO HAVE TRAVELLED UNDER FALSE DOCUMENTS TO THE USSR TO ATTEND SCHOOLS. WHERE THEY LEARNED HOW TO USE WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES AS WELL AS TECHNIQUES OF SUBVERSION FOR THE FUTURE DISSEMINATION OF SUCH KNOWLEDGE IN URUGUAY.

C. ON DEC 20, AMPLIFYING ON ITS PREVIOUS COMMUNIQUE, THE JOINT FORCES ISSUED FURTHER INFORMATION ON URUGUAYAN YOUTHS WHO HAD COMPLETED THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION GIVEN IN THE USSR IN THE ESCUELA INTERNACIONAL DE LAS JUVENTUDES COMUNISTAS DE LA UNION SOVIETICA (KOMSOMOL), WHICH APPARENTLY HAD BEEN RUNNING SUCH A PROGRAM SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE 1960'S. ACCORDING TO THE JOINT FORCES, BETWEEN MARCH AND AUGUST OF 1973, SAXLUND AND GASO AND THREE OTHER URUGUAYAN YOUTHS ATTENDED THE COURSE. FIVE MORE URUGUAYAN YOUTHS ATTENDED THE COURSE FROM OCTOBER 1973 TO APRIL 1974.

D. ON OCT 16, 1975, RODRIGO ALFREDO JARDIM ALVEZ, A GARDENER, WAS CONVICTED FOR COMPLICITY IN ATTACKING THE MORAL STRENGTH (MORALE) OF THE ARMED FORCES (ART. 58 OF MPC ACCORDING TO THE DEFINITION OF COMPLICITY IN ART 62 OF MPC) AND CONSPIRACY FOLLOWED BY PREPARATORY ACTS WITHIN
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A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION (ART 60 OF MPC).

E. ATILIO GERARDO METINI AMAROL, AN ARCHITECTURE STUDENT, WAS CONVICTED OF COMPLICITY IN ATTACKING THE MORAL STRENGTH (MORALE) OF THE ARMED FORCES (ART 58 OF MPC).

F. ON OCT 16, THE JOINT FORCES ISSUED A BULLETIN CONCERNING THE CONVICTION OF 23 PERSONS FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS. THEY APPARENTLY BELONGED TO A GROUP AFFILIATED WITH THE ROE (RESISTENCIA OBRERO ESTUDIANTEL), AN ANARCHIST ORGANIZATION THAT HAD BEEN ORGANIZED AND AFFILIATED WITH A GROUP CALLED O.P.R. 33 (ORGANIZACION REVOLUCIONARIA 33 ORIENTALES). TWELVE WERE CONVICTED FOR "SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION" UNDER ARTICLE 60 OF THE MPC. FOUR WERE CONVICTED FOR SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION" (ART 60 OF MPC) AND DEFAMATION OF THE ARMED FORCES" (ART 58 OF MPC). THREE WERE CONVICTED FOR COMPLICITY WITH RENDERING AID TO SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATIONS (ART 60 OF

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 626

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 4 MONTEVIDEO 0490

MPC ACCORDING TO THE DEFINITION OF "COMPLICITY" GIVEN BY ART 62 OF THE OPC). TWO WERE CONVICTED FOR ASSOCIATION TO TRANSGRESS AGAINST THE PUBLIC PEACE (ART 150 OF OPC) AND ASSISTANCE TO A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION (ART 60 OF MPC). ONE WAS CONVICTED OF CONSPIRACY WITHIN A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION (ART 60 OF MPC). ONE WAS CONVICTED OF ASSISTANCE TO A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION (ART 60 OF MPC). THE BULLETIN ALSO STATED THAT TEN MEMBERS OF REGION NO 3 OF THE PCU WERE CONVICTED FOR THE CRIME OF PROPOSING TO ATTACK THE CONSTITUTION (ART 60 OF MPC).

G. OCT 23, 1975 A LEADER OF THE PCU, DIDARCO PEREZ BACCINO, A TEACHER, WAS INCARCERATED FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBSEQUENT PROSECUTION FOR DISSEMINATING SEDITIOUS IDEAS TO HIS STUDENTS BY SUCH MEANS AS SHOWING MOVIES EXALTING THE CUBAN REVOLUTION AND ATTEMPTS TO EXPORT IT ABROAD, AND PLAYING RECORDS WITH REVOLUTIONARY SONGS.

H. ON NOV 5, THE JOINT FORCES ISSUED A BULLETIN ABOUT THE DETENTION AND ARRAIGNMENT OF 11 PERSONS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CANELONES. THREE WERE ARRESTED FOR ASSOCIATION FOR SUBVERSIVE PURPOSES (ART 60 OF MPC). THREE WERE ARRESTED FOR RENDERING ASSISTANCE TO A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION. (ART 60 OF MPC). FOUR WERE ARRESTED FOR COMPLICITY (ART 62 OF OPC). THE CRIME OF THE LAST ONE WAS NOT SET FORTH.

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I. ON NOV 5, THE JOINT FORCES ORDERED THE ARRAIGNMENT

OF TWO EMPLOYEES OF CUTCSA FOR HAVING SECRETLY DISTRIBUTED PROPAGANDA OF THE PCU IN THEIR PLACES OF WORK. THEY WERE SPECIFICALLY CHARGED WITH COMPLICITY IN RENDERING ASSISTANCE TO A SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATION (ART 62 OF OPC IN CONJUNCTION WITH ART 60 OF MPC).

J. ON NOV 19, THE JOINT FORCRS ANNOUNCED THE INDICTMENT OR ARRAIGNMENT OF JOSE MILTON ALANIS QUINTERO, AUTHOR OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT PAMPHLETS UNDER THE PEN NAME OF "PEPE VENENO," FOR THE CRIME OF ATTACKING THE MORALE OF THE ARMED FORCES (ART 68 OF MPC).

K. ON NOV 20 THREE STUDENTS IN THE FUCULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE REPUBLIC, WERE ARRAIGNED FOR ATTEMPTING TO "DEFAME" THE ARMED FORCES (ART 5 OF OPC IN CONJUNCTION WITH ART 58 OFMPC).

L. ON DEC 22, THE JOINT FORCES ANNOUNCED THAT FROM INFORMATION RECIEVED FROM A PERSON ARRESTED FOR PAINTING COMMUNIST SIGNS ON A PUBLIC STREET, THEY HAD ARRESTED AND ARRAINGED SIX PEOPLE, THREE OF WHOM WERE LEADERS OF REGION 2 OF UNION DE JUVENTUDES COMUNISTAS (UCJ). FOUR WERE ARRAIGNED FOR THE CRIME OF CONSPIRACY FOLLOWED BY PREPARATORY ACTS WITHIN A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION (ART 60 OF MPC). THE TWO OTHERS WERE ARRAIGNED FOR RENDERING ASSISTANCE TO A SUBVERSIVE ASSOCIATION (ART 60 OF MPC). THEY WERE LISTED AS MEMBERS OF THE UCJ AND HAD PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED LEAFLETS OF THE PCU ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS.

M. TO THE FOREGOING MUST BE ADDED THE FIGURES AND NAMES RELEASED IN 75 MVD 4406, AND MVD 0019, WITH REFERENCE TO THE ROUNDUP OF SEVEAL HUNDRED MEMBERS OF THE PCU.THERE MAY BE SOME OVERLAP, HOWEVER.

N. WITH REFERNCE TO PARA 2 OF STATE 019110, THE EMBASSY REGRETS THAT IT HAS NO FIGURES BY WHICH TO COMPARE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED BROUGHT TO TRIAL, AND REMAINING TO BE TRIED IN 1975 WITH THE OTHER YEARS LISTED. WE BELIEVE ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS IN 1975 WERE HIGHER THAN 1974. THIS INCREASE WOULD BE DUE TO ACTIONS TAKEN
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IN THE LAST QUARTER AGAINST THE PCU.

13. GOU EFFORTS IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS
THE SYSTEM OF INFORMATION/CONTROL PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED BY THE COUNCIL OF STATE AS EFFECTIVE HAS NOT WORKED OUT AS INTENDED, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO THE WAVE OF PCU ARRESTS. AS IS OBVIOUS FROM THIS RPORT THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE CHANGE INTHE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION SINCE THE LAST

UP-DATE IN OCT. IN ONE SENSE IT MAY HAVE WORSENERED
BECAUSE OF THE INCREASE IN DETENTIONS OF PCU MEMBERS
RESULTING FROM INFORMATION WHICH PROVED THE EXISTENCE OF
A MAJOR PCU MILITARY APPARATUS, TRAINING, INFILTRATION
OPERATIONS, ETC. THE LEADS WHICH DEVELOPED DURING THE
PCU INVESTIGATION BROUGHT SO MANY ARRESTS THAT THE THREE-
YEAR DOWNWARD TREND IN PRISON POPULATION WAS REVERSED.

THE AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED THE SITUATION WITH THE FOREIGN
MINISTER ON JAN 27. BLANCO REFERRED, AS HE HAD IN THE
PAST, TO A KIND OF WARFARE (THE "THIRD WORLD WAR," IN
FACT) WHICH THE GOU VIEWS AS GOING ON UNDER THE
COVER OF DETENTE, THE NUCLEAR STALEMATE AND THE RISK
THAT CONVENTIONAL WAR MIGHT ESCALATE TO NUCLEAR. URUGUAY,
THE GOU FEELS, IS FOR MANY REASONS A PARTICULAR TARGET
OF THIS WAR WHICH IS FOUGHT BY SUBVERSION, PENETRATION
AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANS, AND HAS THE CORRESPONDING RIGHT

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 627

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 4 OF 4 MONTEVIDEO 0490

OF SELF-DEFENSE. AS A CONSEQUENCE, VIOLATIONS OF NORMAL
PEACETIME HUMAN RIGHTS MAY OCCUR, SUCH AS THE HOLDING OF
PRISONERS INCOMMUNICADO FOR PROTRACTED PERIODS, ETC.
ONLY BY CROSS-INTERROGATION OF PRISONERS PICKED UP
AT DIFFERENT TIMES HAVE AUTHORITIES BEEN ABLE TO GLEAN
SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO GET A TRUE PICTURE OF THE
WORKINGS OF THE PCU APPARATUS. DESPITE THIS, BLANCO
SAID, PHYSICAL TORTURE OF THESE OR ANY OTHER PRISONERS
IS AGAINST GOU POLICY, NOT KNOWINGLY CONDONED, AND IF

IT OCCURS, IT OCCURS ONLY RARELY.

IN STILL ANOTHER DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THE MINISTER TOLD THE AMBASSADOR ON FEB 5 THAT, AS A RESULT OF THEIR PREVIOUS CNVERSATIONN THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT WERE REVIEWING ALL PRACTICES TO BE CERTAIN THAT ABUSES ARE ELIMINATED, THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT IN OPPOSITION TO TORTURE IS FAITHFULLY CARRIED OUT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN IF VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY OCCURES. HE HADPREVIOUSLY SAID THAT DISCIPLINARY ACTION IN SUCH CASES POSES GREAT DIFFICULTIES AND HAD GIVEN EXAMPLES OF OCCASIONS DURING THE TUPAMARO PERIOD WHEN THIS HAD BEEN TRIED. ON THE SUBJECT OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION, IN A DISCUSSION WITH THE DCM ON OCT 10, A HIGH FONOFF OFFICIAL STATED THAT AFTER RESEARCHING THE MATTER DUE TO A PREVIOUS REQUEST FROM THE DCM, HE HAD FOUND THAT THERE HAD IN FACT BEEN CASES OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION
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BEING TAKEN AGAINSTMILITARY OG POLICE KNOWN TO HAVE ENGAGED IN THE PHYSICAL ABUSE OF PRISONERS. HE SAID THAT THIS WAS A VERY SENSTIVE AREA AND THAT DISCIPLINARY ACTION WHEN TAKEN WAS NEVER MADE PUBLIC BECAUSE OF THE MILITARY'S BELIEF THAT THIS WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO OVERALL DISCIPLINE AND MORALE IN THE DIFFICULT PERIOD THROUGH WHICH URUGUAY WAS PASSING.

NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT INTHEMILITARY'S EYES, THE RESORT TO STRONG-ARM METHODS IS STILL JUSTIFIED, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEYCONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE IN A STATE OF WAR, THE RECENT ROUNDUP OF MEMBERS OF THEMILITARY APPARATUS OF THE PCU AND THE BOMBINGS IN PUNTA DEL ESTE ON JAN 11 CAUSE MILITARY OFFICIALS TO TURN A DEAF EAR TO THOSE WHO SAY THAT SUCH DRASTIC METHODS ARE NO LONGER WARRANTED BY THE PRESENT SECURITY SITUATION.

14.EMBASSY APPROACHES TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION IN RESPONSE TO A CABLE ON POSSIBLE AID INITIATIVES IN THE HUMAN RIGHTY AREA, THE COUNTRY TEAM, ON JAN 14, REVIEWED THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN URUGUAY. IT CONCLUDED THAT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT AID PROGRAMS, EXCEPT THOSE WORKING DIRECTLY IN PROGRAMS (PRESENTLY PROSCRIBED) WITH POLICE AND MILITARY UNITS CONDUCTING SECURITY OPERATIONS, WOULD REDUCE SUBSTANTIALLY THE INCIDENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN URUGUAY (REFTEL A).
THE COUNTRY TEAM DID RECOMMEND THAT, AS PART OF ITS CONTINUING DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS WITH THE GOU IN THIS AREA, THAT THE MISSION CONTINUE UTILIZING DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS TO EXPRESS THE UNITED STATES' CONCERN ON THE MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY. AS INDICATED

ABOVE, THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BLANCO
ON JAN 27, SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND AGAIN
DISCUSSED HUMAN RIGHTS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON
FEB 5.
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